attendant advantages of technology transfer, marketing expertise, modern managerial techniques and new possibilities for exports. India, therefore, welcomes all forms of foreign investment wherever it is in the interest of the country's industrial development, creation of more employment opportunities, additionality in exports etc.

(b) and (c) As per Common Minimum Programme, entry of multinationals into low priority areas including consumer goods sector will be discouraged through suitable fiscal and other measures. As such, foreign investment approvals in respect of 22 specified industries in the consumer goods sector, carry the condition of dividend balancing wherein the outflow of foreign exchange on account of dividend payments is to be balanced by export earnings over a period of 7 years.

Loss miking Public Sector Undertakings

1580. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had suffered losses of Rs.5,000 crore in the loss making units which had been taken over by them;

(b) if so, the details thereof, Unit-wise and State and Union territories-wise, as-against profit making units at present;

(c) whether Government have asked the Disinvestment Commission also to take a look of the 40 PSUs referred to it and decide which were strategic and which were non-strategic, if so, the findings/outcome thereof; and

(d) the steps Government have taken so far to make public sector more efficient and more productive, to make them grow and expand and to maximise their returns?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Enterprise-wise detail of net profit/ loss of 47 taken over enterprises during last five years from 1990-91 to 1994-95 is given in Statement No. 7 C of Volume-I of Public Enterprises Survey 1994-95 laid in both Houses of Parliament on 19.7.96. State-wise and Union Territory-wise distribution of these PSEs is given in Appendix-III of the said Volume.

(c) Yes, Sir. 40 PSUs have been referred to Disinvestment Commission for its study.The Commission has recently submitted its report only in respect of 3 enterprises namely, Modern Food Industries Ltd., India Tourism Development Corpn. Ltd. and Gas Authority of India Ltd. Other reports are expected to follow.

(d) Steps for improving the performance of PSUs and making them efficient and productive are enterprise specific. However, some of the steps taken in this regard include periodical performance review meeting by the administrative Ministries/Departments, delegation of enhanced power to Board of Directors, professionlisation of Board Management, reduction of surplus man power through VRS, technological upgradation, etc.

Economic development of North Eastern States

1581. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state: to what extent Government have taken action for economic development of the North Eastern States as per recommendations as contained in the 17th report of Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry presented on the 7th March, 1996?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry in their 17th Report has mentioned that there is need for a time bound programme to be drawn up for economic development of the North Eastern region with emphasis on development of basic infrastructure

such as rail links, roads, air services, power and water. The Government of India has already announced new initiatives for the development of infrastructure in North East. Ministry of Industry through the Growth Centres and Integrated Infrastructure Development Schemes is facilitating the creation of industry related infrastructure. Entrepreneurship development programme and Self-employment through PMRY are also aimed at entrepreneurship diffusion in North Eastern States.

Comprehensive Bill for PF Scheme to Agricultural Labour

1582. SHRI P. SOUNDARA RAJAN:
SHRI R. MARGABANDU:
SHRI O.S. MANIAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to bring a comprehensive Bill for providing Provident Fund Scheme to the agricultural labour;

(b) if so, whether Government will consult all the trade unions including State level unions before drafting the Bill; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to extend this Provident Fund facility to the unorganised agricultural labour in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The agricultural farms, fruit gardens, poultry farms, plantations etc employing 20 or more persons already attract provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. The workers employed in such farms are thus eligible for various benefits provided under the Provident Funds and other schemes framed under the Act. There is no proposal to bring any new Bill for providing Provident Fund for agricultural workers.

Abnormal increase in Agriculture Workers in Maharashtra

1583. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of agricultural workers in the State of Maharashtra as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been abnormal increase in the number of such labourers in the state during the last five years;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take for the Welfare of such labourers and provide alternative source of employment to them in the State with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) Number of agricultural workers in Maharashtra as per 1981 and 1991 census is given below:

Year	No. of agricultural labourers	No. of Cultivators
1981	6,470,855	8,535,910
1991	8,313,223	10,172,108

(d) The Government have taken several steps for the welfare and improvement of conditions of agricultural workers in the country. A large number of existing Labour laws like the Minimum Wages Act, the Equal Remuneration Act, the Child labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act and the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act etc. are applicable to the agricultural workers. The provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act are also applicable to a section of farm labour. Besides, a proposal for introducing a comprehensive Central legislation for agricultural workers to provide for regulation of their employment and working conditions and to provide for their welfare is under Government's consideration. Apart from